



## **Dawes Community Childcare Centre**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	160294
<b>Inspection date</b>	15 September 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Annie Williams
<b>Setting Address</b>	The Dawes Community Centre, Forstal, Hernhill, Faversham, Kent, ME13 9JG
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<b>Registered person</b>	Dawes Community Childcare Centre
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Dawes Community Childcare Centre opened in 1992 and operates from the community centre in Hernehill, Faversham, Kent. The centre has access to two rooms, a kitchen, an office, toilets and an outside area. A maximum of 33 children may attend the childcare centre at any one time. The centre provides a breakfast club, a pre-school, an out of school club and a holiday play scheme. Children up to the age of 11 may attend the out of school provisions. The childcare centre is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 50 weeks of the year.

There are currently 94 children on roll. Of these, 11 children receive funding for early education. The childcare centre supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

There are seven practitioners employed by the childcare centre. All are qualified in early years. The childcare centre receives support from the Local Authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

The premises are cleaned to a satisfactory standard. A newly introduced snack bar successfully encourages pre-school children to make some healthy choices and have a positive attitude towards eating different fruits such as, grapes and strawberries. Children attending the out of school club also have a snack time but this is less healthy, for example, toast with sugary toppings. Although there is a policy relating to food and drink, this does not refer to healthy eating and as a result, children are not encouraged to learn about the importance of healthy and nutritious food for healthy growth and development. A jug of water is available for all children who attend the setting to help themselves when they feel thirsty and the provision of drinks as part of routine snack time helps keep children's bodies hydrated.

Children wash hands before snack and after using the toilet, but pre-school children's independence is compromised because some paper towel dispensers are positioned too high and as a result children have to ask practitioners for assistance. The procedure for nappy changes contributes to preventing the spread of infection because practitioners wear disposable gloves and wipe the mat in-between changes. However, the introduction of good hand-washing practices has not yet been established for children after they have had their nappy changed.

Children's health is protected from the effects of the sun because there are clear procedures to follow for the application of sun cream. Clear documentation is available which alerts practitioners to signs and symptoms of allergies and careful supervision at lunch times ensures that no food swapping takes place. Consequently, children with allergies are protected and practitioners are able to act quickly in the event of an allergic reaction.

A clear sick child policy, permission for practitioners to seek emergency medical advice or treatment and practitioner's up-to-date first aid training means that they are able to act in the best interest of children in a medical emergency. Records related to accidents are clear and provide parents with appropriate information to keep children healthy when they leave the setting for the day. Although the procedure for administering medication is understood by practitioners, the written records contain insufficient information.

Children have daily opportunities to experience play that enables them to practice and hone their large muscle skills; a park on the grounds enables children to use the fixed equipment to climb, swing and travel up and down the slide, but this is sometimes interrupted because it is used by the general public. Although outdoor play is a feature of the daily routine this is not planned and as a result children are not always sufficiently challenged in this area.

## **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are able to play with a range of toys and resources that promote all areas of learning and are cleaned to a satisfactory standard because a toy cleaning rota has recently been introduced. The premises are safe. Systems for the arrival and collection of children are good because practitioners ensure that children are collected by authorised adults, for example, a practitioner is always on the door at arrival and collection times and details are taken of authorised adults. Children are familiar with the safety rules and the evacuation plan and are able to describe them. Fire detection equipment is accessible, the fire evacuation plan is displayed, exits are clearly labelled and fire drills are carried out periodically and take into account the patterns of attendance of children and practitioners. Consequently, children are able to leave the building safely in the event of an emergency.

Children's safety outside is reliant on the vigilance of practitioners because the outdoor area is a public play area. As a result, practitioner's involvement in children's outside play activities within the out of school club is supervisory. The responsibility for health and safety has recently been given to a practitioner, but as yet there are no risk assessments undertaken. Therefore, hazards that are a potential risk have not been identified such as trailing wires from the air cooler and trip hazards from rugs. Most Practitioners are easily identifiable because they wear a specific t-shirt; as a result, they are identifiable to the children and visitors as a safe person to go to when needed.

A sound knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and a clear child protection policy understood by practitioners contributes to safeguarding children. In addition what to do if you are worried a child is being abused is displayed prominently within the setting to keep parents, practitioners and visitors informed.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Young children arrive happily and settle to play with the support of the practitioners who are kind and caring in their approach. Planning for younger children is evolving and links to the Birth to three matters framework, but is often made to fit activities for the Foundation Stage. Consequently, they are not always appropriate. Some of the routines do not meet the needs of the younger children, for example, large circle time and story time. As a result, younger children are distracted at these times. Positive relationships are evident within the group. Children enjoy the play opportunities provided and play with their friends and practitioners who recognise the importance of play.

Children attending the out of school club enter the setting happily and confidently. They clearly enjoy positive relationships with practitioners who play with them or provide a supervisory role according to children's wishes, for example, playing a game of chess, helping children with hamma beads or standing back to supervise a game of football. The environment is calm and children are able to choose what they wish to do to relax after school.

## **Nursery Education**

Teaching and learning is satisfactory. Practitioners have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and how young children learn, as a result, children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. Children are supported in their play by practitioners who spend time talking to them about what they are doing. Planning and assessment is evolving. Practitioners meet together to plan for the children based on a theme. Plans are not yet based on children's interests, what children know and what they need to learn next. Consequently, children are not always effectively challenged in the activities that they complete. Development records contain some observations about what the children can do but next steps are not always clearly identified and records are not updated frequently enough to reflect where children are in their learning.

Children move around the setting confidently and safely. They arrive happily, separate easily from their parent or carer and quickly settle to their chosen play activity. They have made positive relationships with their friends and practitioners. They happily share, for example, the play dough. Practitioners are kind and caring in their interactions with the children and support them by modelling language such as please and thank you. Children are becoming confident speakers to adults, their friends and in small groups because practitioners encourage them to talk about their home experiences, likes and dislikes. Because of the successful organisation of the snack bar, children are able to be independent; they choose their name and post it into the snack box, take a plate, choose fruit and pour a drink of milk or water. Opportunities to further extend children's independence are planned so that they can help to prepare the fruit and wash up after snack time.

Children are encouraged to recall their experiences as they sit and chat with practitioners as they play, for example, they talk about the work men digging up the road on the way to pre-school. Useful questioning techniques applied by practitioners encourage children to think such as, why is the road blocked and what do you have to do to get to pre-school.

Most children can recognise their names because practitioners have introduced good opportunities for them to see and choose their names; for example, at snack time. Circle time is less successful for younger children because they have to wait whilst practitioners hold up their names so that they can place it on the snake. The book area has recently been re-vamped to make it cosier and more attractive to children. Consequently, children visit the book area more frequently, especially if a practitioner is there. Children choose their favourite book and learn how a book works because they are invited to turn pages. The environment includes labels for children to develop awareness that print carries meaning but attractive displays, such as the alphabet is positioned too high for the children to see and refer to in their play. There is a writing area but this is not very attractive and easily identifiable, consequently children do not frequently visit the writing area to practice their skills and although the role play area is attractively presented practitioners have not thought of the benefits of writing for a purpose in the context of children's role play.

Children learn and use mathematical language, for example, they announce that their play dough is getting bigger as they roll it out and a more able child knows it is because he is rolling it out that it is getting bigger. There are shapes around the room that practitioners encourage children to point out, for example, as they make shapes with the dough. Consequently, children are able to name and recognise some shapes. Circle time is also used to introduce shapes but

this is less successful in capturing the interest of younger children. Counting is a regular feature of the day and children count as part of singing, therefore, children are becoming confident in counting. Children are introduced to numbers at circle time where they count together and then look at the date, but this is too difficult for many children in particular the young children. There is a number line in the setting but this is positioned too high for children to refer to in their play. Children learn about matching, sorting and turn taking, through board games with the gentle support of practitioners, for example, the game of shopping lists. Simple measurement is introduced through activities, such as, making play dough and icing for fairy cakes.

Children are able to explore and investigate a range of materials such as, icing sugar, sand and dough. They are developing their small muscle skills and are able to poke, pinch, squeeze, cut and roll dough to make models. Children use a range of tools in their play such as the hammer, saw and drill and are able to hone their small muscle skills, for example, as they learn to turn the screws in the workbench and place small beads into boards. The setting has a computer which is popular amongst the children and provides them with programmes to support their learning. They laugh out loud as they skilfully use the keys to manoeuvre the moose around the obstacle course. A regular routine provided by practitioners means that children are developing a sense of time; for example, they are able to say what happens next such as, 'it is circle time and then outside'. There are plans to introduce a time line to further help younger children develop a sense of time and help in the settling in process.

Singing is a popular feature of the day; children choose a song from the song box and join in together enthusiastically with words and actions. Musical instruments feature in the planning but they are not freely available to the children because they are stored in the cupboard. Children frequently visit the easel to paint a picture and use a variety of different coloured paints and brushes in varying sizes. Displays and photos show that children explore different painting techniques such as hand prints, sponge printing and brush painting. Although the displays show practitioners hard work, the pre-cut templates do not sufficiently allow children to use their imaginations in art and design. Children receive opportunities each day to develop their imaginative play; they enjoy role play especially when a practitioner is involved. They engage in pretend play based on their experiences such as, feeding dollies, making dinner for their friends and answering the phone. A range of dressing up clothes is positioned near to the home corner which allows children to dress up and pretend to be someone else, for example, a fire fighter.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play well together, for example, in the out of school club they share, take turns and chat as they involve themselves in their chosen activity, such as, making patterns with hamma beads or playing on the computer. Children are happy and settled at the setting. Pre-school children enter the setting happily and separate easily from their main carer. Out of school children arrive happily and relax after a day at school. Children know the rules within the group and are relaxed and well behaved. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are supported in the setting and a special needs co-ordinator is in post. Importance is placed on working with outside agencies to meet the needs of children. Facilities are available so that children who

have a disability do not have their independence compromised, for example, there is a disabled toilet and a ramp.

Children's personal cultures are acknowledged by practitioners, for example, birthdays are acknowledged and celebrated if appropriate. Children learn about different cultures through planned activities related to different festivals such as, Chinese New Year, Diwali, Christmas and Eid. Resources within the setting also help children find out about differences such as, books and dressing up clothes, but there are no posters or photographs that reflect positive images to further develop children's awareness of the differences in our society. Children find out about the local community through walks to the school and to the church. Visitors into the setting help children find out about the wider world such as the local vicar and the dentist. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is satisfactory. They are happy with the care provided by practitioners who are friendly and positive in their interactions towards them. A display board informs parents about the Foundation Stage and refers to policies. Planned meetings with key workers enable parents to view their child's records and inform them of their child's development but these are not frequent enough and if parents or practitioners cannot make the meeting then this is overlooked. The prospectus has been updated to give parents useful information about the educational programme, but this has only been given to new parents and as a result, they are not all fully informed. Newsletters are sent out each half term to keep parents informed of the setting. Opportunities to involve parents in their child's development at home and to seek parent's views about the setting have not yet been developed. A complaints poster is displayed and there is a complaints policy displayed on the board, this enables parents to know what to do if they have concerns. A range of policies are available about the setting, but these are not readily available to parents because they are kept in the office and parents have to ask for them.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. The provider is able to show that all adults working at the setting have undergone checks to establish their suitability and all practitioners are appropriately qualified in childcare. The registration certificate is displayed and the attendance register confirms that the provider complies with the conditions of registration. All the required documentation is maintained and currently under review by the new manager who has a supernumerary role. The required records for the safe and efficient management of the setting are maintained and stored securely for the welfare and care of children. There is an administrator at the setting; therefore practitioners are able to dedicate their time to the children. The pace and routine of the day is generally balanced, but large circle time and story time is not always appropriate for younger children.

The Leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. The manager is new to the setting and has already correctly identified the strengths and weaknesses of the setting and produced an action plan which has taken the setting forward. A training plan has been produced by the manager which highlights training needs for practitioners, such as, planning and assessment to promote best outcomes for children. Appraisal sheets have been devised by the new manager

to ensure that practitioners are involved in their personal development. A communication folder ensures that all practitioners are kept fully informed of ideas and any changes such as, the introduction of photo albums for the children to look at and recall past events.

Practitioners are positive in their approach and work well as a team. They prepare the environment with a range of activities before the children arrive, which helps children to be involved in play straight away. Practitioners are keen to develop their skills and are working closely with the teacher from the Local Authority to develop their planning and assessment. Practitioners know the children well and meet regularly to plan. However, they are not updating the children's development records frequently enough and therefore the records do not accurately reflect children's abilities to enable them to plan effectively for children's next steps in their learning. Planning is based on a theme and practitioners take an aspect of learning each day to plan, but practitioners do not always identify who the activity is particularly appropriate to. Children's involvement in activities is recorded and although this information is useful to practitioners in finding out who participated, it does not help them find out the success of the activity and the impact on the children's learning.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection, the quality and standards of nursery education was judged as inadequate. As a result, five actions were raised relating to practitioner's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage, planning and assessment, partnership with parents and the provision of communication language and literacy and mathematical development.

Practitioners have received support from the Local Authority and developed a satisfactory knowledge of the Foundation Stage and as a result, children are making satisfactory progress. Planning and assessment is evolving and links to the areas of learning. All practitioners are now involved in the planning enabling them to understand the stepping stones to better support children's learning. Assessment is based on observations but they do not always identify children's next steps and are not up-dated frequently enough to ensure children are challenged effectively. The provision of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development is included in the planning. Consequently, children receive more opportunities to extend their learning in these areas. Partnership with parents has improved because they are now provided with some information in the form of a regular newsletter, displays and a prospectus. However, although the prospectus has been updated to give parents useful information about the Foundation Stage, this has only been given to new parents and as a result, not all parents are fully informed.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.



## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

#### The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- introduce a healthy eating policy to share with parents
- develop the health and safety risk assessments to identify and reduce risks around the setting
- establish a system to ensure that the medication records include the required information
- re-organise circle time and story time to ensure that the routines are appropriate for children[applies to nursery education also]
- further develop practitioner's knowledge and understanding of how to plan effectively to support young children

#### The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- improve the frequency and use of observations to identify what children know and can do, what they need to learn next and use this information to inform the planning
- further improve partnership with parents and carers to ensure that all parents are aware of the Foundation stage and have frequent opportunities to be involved in their child's learning and contribute to children's development records
- improve systems for evaluating the planned activities and establishing the impact on children's learning.

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